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PRESS RELEASE

Central Asia's energy companies are developing ways to improve energy transmission in the region

Representatives of energy transmission companies from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have gathered in Almaty from July 30-31, 2008 to discuss the development of the regional electric energy transmission model. The meeting was facilitated by the USAID Central Asian Regional Transmission Planning Project (CARTRANS) that is implemented by the U.S. Energy Association to improve energy flows within the region.

The Central Asian electric energy transmission model, which is being developed with support from USAID, will enable the Central Asian countries to better plan and manage energy flows within and between the countries in the region. The model is expected to become operational in October 2008.

Central Asia's energy transmission system includes national electric power systems on Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, as well as the southern part of Kazakhstan. This system, built during the soviet period, presumes interdependency of the countries, and requires joint planning for optimal flows of energy within each country. "The joint simulation model of the region's electricity network will provide information about the transmission capacities in each section of the system," noted USAID's energy specialist Sergey Yelkin. "This will enable national energy transmission planners to optimize the amounts of transmitted energy and decrease energy shutdowns, especially in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan."

The meeting included transmission planning engineers from the Coordinative Dispatch Center "Energia," the Kazakhstan Electric Grid Operating Company (KEGOC), the National Electric Grid of Kyrgyzstan, Barki Tojik of Tajikistan, and Uzbekenergo. Participants discussed the status of their national models, the use of the regional model, when it's completed, and steps for the further improvement of energy systems in the region. While the current model only includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, the participants are hoping that Turkmenistan will also join it in the nearest future.

A similar regional energy planning model has already been created with USAID support in the Black Sea region (for Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine). "This model helps participating countries to prioritize investments into the energy system. For example, Georgia is planning to expand its electricity network to facilitate the transit of surplus electricity from Azerbaijan to Turkey. This upgrade will create a new revenue source for Georgia and provide it with access to energy during the periods of energy shortage in the country," noted the manager of the USAID-funded project, Will Pollen.

CARTRANS project is one of the many assistance projects implemented in Central Asia by USAID on behalf of the American people. Since 1992 the American people through USAID have provided over \$1.5 billion in assistance programs that support economic growth, democratic institutions, health care, and education systems in Central Asia.

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